

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for expanding a subject's population of insulin-producing cells, comprising administering an effective amount of a TGF- α polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:1), a TGF- α -related polypeptide, a TGF- α 57 polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:3), a fragment thereof, or a mimetic thereof.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the TGF- α polypeptide, TGF- α -related polypeptide, TGF- α 57 polypeptide, fragment thereof, or mimetic thereof is pegylated.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the polypeptide is TGF- α .
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the polypeptide is a TGF- α -related polypeptide.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the TGF- α -related polypeptide is: vaccinia growth factor, amphiregulin precursor, betacellulin precursor, betacellulin, heparin binding EGF-like growth factor, epiregulin (rodents), HUS 19878, myxomavirus growth factor (MGF), Shope fibroma virus growth factor (SFGF), or schwannoma derived growth factor.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the TGF- α -related polypeptide is pegylated.
7. The method of claim 5, wherein the TGF- α -related polypeptide is betacellulin.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein the betacellulin is pegylated.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the insulin-producing cells are pancreatic stem cells.
10. A method for treating Type I or Type II diabetes comprising administering an effective amount of a combination consisting of:
 - a) a TGF- α polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:1), a fragment thereof, or a mimetic thereof; and
 - b) a TGF- α -related polypeptide.
11. The method of claim 10, wherein the TGF- α related polypeptide is: vaccinia growth factor, amphiregulin precursor, betacellulin precursor, betacellulin, heparin binding EGF-like growth factor, epiregulin (rodents), HUS 19878, myxomavirus growth factor (MGF), Shope fibroma virus growth factor (SFGF), or schwannoma derived growth factor.
12. The method of claim 11, wherein the TGF- α -related polypeptide is pegylated.
13. The method of claim 11, wherein the TGF- α -related polypeptide is betacellulin.
14. The method of claim 13, wherein the betacellulin is pegylated.

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to a review of the literature on the topic. It starts with a general overview of the field, followed by a more detailed discussion of the specific issues at hand. The author then presents his own findings, which are based on a series of experiments. These findings are then compared with the results of previous studies, and the author discusses the implications of his work. Finally, the paper concludes with a summary of the main points and some suggestions for future research.